



Canterbury City Council's draft new Local Plan To 2045

1 message

JDH [REDACTED]
To: consultations@canterbury.gov.uk

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Re. Draft Canterbury district Local Plan 2020 to 2045

As someone who was born, schooled, and lived the majority of my adult life in Canterbury, Herne Bay and Hoath, I am appalled by the draft local plan. I am lucky to have had children move out of school age at a time when the buses to our village, and when the local council appear to, at best, not support car journeys.

There has been considerable growth in the built up area over the years. Perhaps a certain degree of inevitability as we live longer, though the birth rate does not justify such increase at present. In the recent past it has been reported that CCC want not just to meet their government growth targets, but to increase them significantly as a means to obtain cash for certain projects. The local plan certainly has a huge amount of growth included in it – in a county that has already grown by well above the national average, and is one of the most densely populated in the UK. Just to be clear, as a local, I do not support this level of growth. If Kentonline comments are at all a litmus test for other residents, then there is a strong feeling across the district that we have suffered enough from the huge losses of green fields over the years. CCC have not made a rational case for such growth (other than blaming central government). We all see properties which have become second homes for people from other areas, and know of the high ratio of purchasing of homes by speculators rather than home makers. How many are used as social housing from other regions, and how has this affected county lines? What has growth done for us over the past 50 years – much busier roads, litter, parking charges if we just want to go for a walk, difficulty in accessing health services, closure of public facilities, less effective police presence and all that that entails; etc etc.. If CCC think that growth will improve these issues then let them put up the case, but it is more likely that it will be the opposite, as has been evident in recent decades.

As for my own village (Hoath), like so many others we wish to live in a small community – a bit out of the way. By allowing major growth to small villages, they will disappear. Please try to persuade us that allowing a 17 house development in our village will be good for us. It isn't what we want. Dangling the carrot of a village shop is a red herring – with a Sainsbury just down the road, no local shop will compete on price, as has been demonstrated in the past. As for the comment on overflow parking for the school – the comments are already out of date as the new village green car park has addressed this particular issue. 17 house in the context of Hoath is a huge increase, not 'modest' as the report suggests. Mr Fuller, when he wanted to put some housing up (and gave the village a green and carpark) asked for the views of the village first, and made it plain that if there village were against it, then it would not happen. Perhaps others would follow his example. The development at Church Farm, Hoath appears to fail policy DS14 part 3 and R28.

Regarding road travel, farm vehicle traffic in recent years has increased both in terms of density and vehicle size, particularly with much of the local land given over to bio fuel rather than crops. General road vehicles have also increased in density and in size. Increased development in Hersden and surrounding areas have made a noticeable difference to our village. Any new development along the A28 will give more stress to the small local roads, and to access to Canterbury from the east. Some of these roads are in a shocking state, especially at the edges. All too often 2 vehicles cannot pass without one or both going off road, especially when the tractors are running. Density of traffic makes it impossible to pass only at a wider sections of the road.

DS13 part one makes it clear that CCC do not like cars. As a keen walker, and historical cyclist I applaud efforts to provide safe routes for these methods of transport. I can also sympathise with the view that collecting school children by driving very short distances is not optimal. However, this appears to me to distort the absolute need to use a car. For some reason, CCC suggesting using a bike for a necessary journey brings pictures of nice summer afternoons, without the need to carry anything or anybody, or to carry out multiple events on one trip. There are so many circumstances when cycling is not appropriate – eg. poor weather, poor health, load carrying, time constraints, distances, less safe, can't cycle etc etc. The touted ANPR system in Canterbury appears to completely misunderstand the needs of the people who drive in Canterbury, and will put a considerable amount of miles just to do quite mundane trips. Canterbury has always needed a bypass/ringroad – if this is quicker than driving through the city then people will use it, and will relieve part of the city and will not need the idea of forcing cars to enter, leave and re-enter the city just to so as not to cross boundaries. The ANPR system will multiply the mileage of certain trips – surely to be avoided in a time of climate emergency? City air quality is used as a justification – surely the time scale of an ANPR system will see a significant benefit from cleaner engines in circulation, and from the move to electric vehicles? If air quality is the main driver then follow the example of other cities with clean air zones. A zoned Canterbury is a direct attack on our civil liberties, and will generate a considerable amount of ill feeling if pursued.

If CCC truly believe walking and fresh air are good for the nation's health, then why discourage people with parking charges in out of town and rural car parks designed for just that?

Canterbury is a huge centre within the context of the surrounding villages and towns, particularly for work, education and shopping. I am relieved that my 3 children have grown up and no longer attend 3 secondary schools in different parts of the city - now that we have no buses at all it must create so much more stress on parents in this area. However, even when the buses were running, I regularly had to pick up and drop off across the city at various time especially for after schools events – journeys that would make a zone restriction look like complete madness. Public transport has its place, but society has been designed over the past several decades around the car, and this plan continues to do so. Planning around cars need to be embraced.

In summary, I am shocked with the desire for this continued huge growth rate. Additionally DS13 shows the divide between how CCC would like to see the direction of their transport policy – completely out of touch from the pressures on our daily lives.

Kent is becoming less and less enjoyable to live in.

Jonathan Hopper